

# GUATEMALAN RAINBOW

May 2007

## Design Inspiration

This ensemble was designed to showcase the beauty of hand-woven Guatemalan cottons. The piecework for the jacket was begun in a class by Priscilla Bianchi on the use of striped fabrics in quilts. The piecework is complemented by the brightly colored skirt and by the colors and design of the decorative stitching on the upper front and back of the jacket. The ensemble is completed by a matching top and purse.

## Fabrics

Jacket: 100% cotton hand-woven Guatemalan fabrics, 100% crinkled tencel. 30% wool 40% polyester 30% rayon pinstripe, 100% rayon Bemberg lining.

Skirt: 100% linen/cotton, 30% wool 40% polyester 30% rayon pinstripe, 100% silk organza underlining, 100% rayon Bemberg lining.

Top: cotton/lycra knit.

Purse: 100% cotton hand-woven Guatemalan fabrics, 100% crinkled tencel. 30% wool 40% polyester 30% rayon pinstripe, flannel-backed lining.

## Embellishments

Jacket: piecework, double-needle decorative stitching with 100% variegated cotton thread, contrast collar, cuffs and pleat underlays, hand-made bows, custom-made piping.

Skirt: contrast pleat underlays, hand-made bows.

Top: hand-made bow.

Purse: piecework, double-needle decorative stitching, custom-made piping.

## Patterns

Jacket and Skirt: Simplicity 4047 (modified).

Top: Simplicity

Purse: Butterick 4409, View E (modified).

## Special Sewing Techniques

For the jacket, a dozen different striped cottons have been pieced into an intricate patchwork

pattern consisting of mitered triangles. Precision stitching was required to make sure that all the stripes matched correctly at the mitered joins. The patchwork pattern uses the directional nature of the stripes to build alternating blocks of “X’s” and “O’s”. These blocks are then pieced together to form the lower bands of the jacket. Steam shaping is used to coax the patchwork into the curved shapes required for the pattern pieces.

The upper front and back of the jacket have been decoratively stitched with two colors of variegated thread that pick up the colors of the Guatemalan fabrics. The stitching pattern is a custom-programmed design that includes randomly-placed triangular-shaped jogs to coordinate with the patchwork. The collar, cuffs and back pleat on the jacket are made from a co-ordinating pinstriped fabric. The jacket edges are finished with piping trim made from the skirt fabric. Hand-made bows add an interesting detail to the back pleat and the front closure.

The back of the skirt has been modified to include 5 box pleats of graduated lengths. These pleats use the same pinstriped fabric underlay as on the jacket. The center-back pleat and the front waist are further trimmed with hand-made bows, as is the collar of the co-ordinating knit top. The construction techniques for the purse are similar to those for the jacket.

## **Exhibitions and Awards**

2nd place, Full Ensemble, Pennsylvania National Quilt Extravaganza XIV, September 2007.

Finalist, Quilted Clothing, 39th Annual NQA Quilt Show, June 2008.